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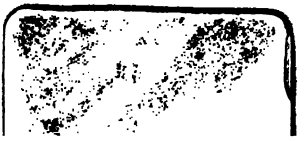

DENYER THEOLOGICAL PRIZE ESSAY, 1859.

ON

THE USE AND ABUSE OF THE PROVERB,

"Charity begins at Home."

BY THE

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"νυνὶ δὲ μένει πίστις, ἐλπὶς, ἀγάπη.
ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε ἐκπίπτει."—1 Cor. xiii. 13, 8.

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An Essay, &c.

The charge of corrupting philosophy by the use of language is one which must always possess a certain amount of truth, and one to which the English writer is far more liable than was his Greek predecessor, since the instruments with which he has to work are both fewer and of a ruder kind; the phraseology which he possesses for the communication of his thoughts is at once less copious and less clear. The inadequacy of the words of ordinary language for the purposes of philosophy, is a difficulty which is well known and felt by all the students of that science, in its various forms; while, on the other hand, they are met by the no less perplexing fact, that it is impossible to render their exoteric discourses and writings intelligible otherwise than by the employment of such ordinary terms. Such is the dilemma in which they are placed: they must either teach their readers, as it were, a new language, or they must be content to use words and phrases which are far from being adapted to the conceptions they are designed to represent.

It is the moral philosopher, who most of all is exposed to these difficulties,—who, being concerned with the matter of every-day life, is most of all constrained to clothe his thoughts in such commonplace language,—who, treating of principles and duties which pertain unto all, in which all feel that they are concerned, and the discussion of which they therefore consider should be carried on in terms such as all can understand,—is thus especially withheld from introducing any innovation in diction; while the ordinary terms relating to the subject with which he deals are, in many cases, already perverted from their proper meaning by misapprehension or prejudice[a].

And nowhere perhaps does he meet with such glaring misapplication of language, nowhere, as we might naturally

[a] Vid. Mackintosh's Progress of Ethical Philosophy, Introduction, pp. 1, 2.

expect, is such confusion of words and ideas, and consequent corruption of truth, so common and so clearly discernible, as in those cases where it is attempted to embody some abstruse ethical principle so plainly and exclusively in the every-day language of the people at large, as to render it "familiar in their mouths as household words." Such attempts are many (may we not say *most*) of those popular maxims which are termed proverbs. They are often "thorns in the side" of the moral philosopher; perverting, sometimes by design, but far more frequently by misapprehension, the primary and fundamental truths which form the very root and basis of his system; calling good evil, and evil good; putting bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter; so that many, as he feels, will by means of these come to the perusal of his works with distorted sight and perverted minds, whose errors, on the one hand, it is his duty to correct, while, on the other, he must be on his guard against too abruptly opening their eyes, lest some prejudice should be aroused, some favourite weakness rudely exposed, and so they should at once close their ears in anger to all the rest of his instructions.

And yet let it not be supposed that we intend hereby to utter a sweeping invective against *all* proverbs, and to declaim universally against their use. The example of the divinely inspired and "wisest of men," who embodies the greater part of his teaching in these homely maxims, itself furnishes a strong precedent in favour of their employment. But there is no argument in their support which can have such weight with the true Christian as the frequency with which our blessed Lord Himself makes use of them in those discourses, the words of which are "the spirit and the life;" both availing Himself of those already in vogue among the Jews, and applying them to the new truths of the Gospel, and also, as it seems, often inventing them Himself, as a means of bringing His doctrines more forcibly home to the hearts of his hearers[b].

[b] In St. John xvi. 29, the word is used, in our translation, in the opposite sense, to denote a dark saying; but here the Greek should rather be translated 'parable,' as in the margin,—Ἴδε νῦν παῤῥησίᾳ λαλεῖς, καὶ παροιμίαν οὐδεμίαν λέγεις.

The generality of proverbs do indeed express, at least in their design, sound moral teaching, and answer to the description of them given by Camden, as "concise, witty, and wise speeches, grounded upon long experience, and containing for the most part some useful caveat;" or to the still more terse and striking definition of a proverb, as "the wit of one man, and the wisdom of many." But may it not in some sense be said of proverbs, as it has been said of words, that they are "the counters of wise men, but the money of fools." Nothing, indeed, can be more useful and salutary than these maxims usually are in their design, enforcing, as they do, the great truths of morality in terms which strike home at once to the hearts of all, even of those of the meanest capacities; or conveying some precept in a way less direct, though eventually perhaps still more touching and effective, through the medium of some homely metaphor, which is readily and universally intelligible. Yet how often, in the hands of the unwary, does a misapprehension of their meaning result in the firm implanting of a wrong principle, and so in the production of a permanent effect upon the character and life: and how many men do we meet with, who make these, and these alone, their stock-in-hand (as we may term it) of morality; on whose lips some proverb is ever ready, conveying at best but a partial truth, sometimes so utterly misapplied as to declare a complete falsehood, which may thus, by wilful perversion, act as a salve to the guilty conscience, and be a cloke not only for 'negligences,' but even for the commission of actual sins.

Among the many proverbs open to such misapplication, there is perhaps none more commonly thus abused than the one before us[c]. In its primary intention, it contains a most sound and wholesome truth: it enforces the preservation of that order and harmony which emanate from the great Author of our being Himself; it seeks but to maintain those natural ties of kindred and acquaintance, which He designed to be the result of the grouping of mankind into families and neighbourhoods, and to draw more firmly around us

[c] "Be just before you are generous" is a kindred proverb, equally salutary in its design, equally liable to abuse.

those bands of love and friendship, the principle of which He Himself hath implanted in our breasts. In the different acceptations of which it is capable, according as we narrow or extend the sphere of our 'at home,' it may be said to teach the duty of proper self-love and respect, and the sanctity of the family ties; or even, to take a wider range, the virtue of patriotism, and the sympathetic bond of Christian brotherhood. But while declaring that our charity must *begin* at home, it is far from implying that it must *end* there; while enforcing the existence of prior claims upon our love and affection, it is far from running counter to the great duty of universal benevolence, or denying that these sympathies should be so expanded as to embrace in a weaker form and inferior degree the whole human race. And yet this proverb is frequently perverted into a cloke for the most utter selfishness, a plea for ingratitude and hardness of heart, an excuse for the violation of His great command, who hath required that as He hath loved us, so we should also love one another.

But the proverb before us is *peculiarly* liable to such abuse, from the double meaning of that term which it proposes, in some sense, to explain, the twofold nature of the virtue expressed thereby; or rather perhaps we should say, the two distinct virtues to which the term charity is applied, (distinct partly in operation, though identical in origin,) of both of which it may be understood to declare the proper sphere, wherein they ought to be primarily and mainly practised. The word charity, which is our translation of the Greek ἀγαπή, and the Latin *caritas*, primarily and more properly denotes, like these, not almsgiving alone, but that spirit of universal good-will or benevolence which is itself the source and fount of such liberality, and of which almsgiving is one great proof[d]. Charity is, properly speaking,

[d] Thus the virtue of liberality is regarded by St. John as the one great mode of the operation and proof of the existence of brotherly love. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." 1 St. John iii. 16—18. Yet are they distinct virtues in their exercise, insomuch that, as

not a collection of good *deeds*, but a state and disposition of the heart. It is the *principle* which calls these good deeds into action; the source and fount from which they flow; the tree which, itself rooted firmly in the ground of faith, and watered there by the dews of heaven, brings forth necessarily the fruits of love. But since it is by such deeds of kindness especially that charity outwardly manifests itself, the name of the tree has been commonly appropriated to the fruits; the term which properly denotes the affection itself has been narrowed so as to be confined to these results thereof[e]. It is with reference to this narrower use of the term 'charity,' that the proverb is most frequently abused, so as to furnish an excuse for the grudging heart and niggard hand of those who, having this world's goods, and seeing their brother have need, by shutting up their bowels of compassion from him, shew plainly that the love of God dwelleth not in them.

Before proceeding to discuss further the question, in what sense and how far it is true that "Charity begins at home," it may be well to analyze the proverb before us, and collate all the possible interpretations of which it seems capable.

The word 'charity' denotes, as we have seen, either love,

St. Paul implies, a man may give all his goods to the poor, and yet be devoid of true charity. Liberality may exist without true charity; but charity, itself the offspring of faith, is sure to bring forth, as its natural fruit, liberality. Cf. St. James ii. 15, 16.

[e] Such confusion or error in words may arise in two ways: either when a word has its original meaning extended, so as to be predicable in a wider sphere, and used in a loose and vague sense; or when it is made more specific and comprehensive, and employed in a narrower application than was its original design. Charity, used to denote almsgiving, is an instance of the latter.

The Greek ἐλεημοσύνη furnishes an exactly parallel case, our word 'alms,' derived from it, retaining this secondary meaning. "The word for pity (ἐλεημοσύνη) came to signify the evidence of pity which is given by bounty to the poor. It had this signification among the Jews. So St. Matt. vi. 1,—'Take heed that ye do not your *alms* before men to be seen of them[*].' The word alms is contracted from ἐλεημοσύνη, as is the case with the corresponding words in other European languages, (Italian, Elimosina, Limosina;—Spanish, Limosna;—Old Fr., Almosne, Aumosne;—Anglo-Saxon, Ælmesn, Ælmes)." —*Whewell's Elements of Morality*, vol. i. p. 305, § 497.

[*] προσέχετε τὴν ἐλεημοσύνην ὑμῶν μὴ ποιεῖν, κ τ.λ. Cf. St. Luke xi. 41, xii. 33; Acts iii. 2, ix. 36, x. 2, 4, 31, xxiv. 17.

affection, benevolence; or almsgiving, liberality. The phrase 'at home' also is capable of different explanations, and may be regarded as referring to, according as we extend or limit its sphere of predication, either ourselves, our family and household, our relatives, or all who possess any marked and distinguishing bond of union with us. While the verb 'begins' must be taken as equal to 'has its first origin,' 'its primary and proper sphere.'

Combining, then, these various interpretations of its component words, the principal and most palpable interpretations which the proverb itself may bear seem to be these:—

1. Love or affection has its origin in ourselves.
2. Love is rightly bestowed first upon ourselves.
3. Benevolence proceeds from, or is coincident in principle with, self-love[f].
4. Love is primarily and chiefly bestowed (or is to be bestowed) on those most nearly connected with us, or on those who have some bond of union with us.
5. We are bound first of all to assist by the practice of almsgiving, or other good deeds, our own kindred, neighbours, or those otherwise connected with us.

The first of these, a sense in which the proverb is never perhaps actually employed, is of course in some measure true. It traces the stream of benevolence and love back to its fount in the human heart, but carries not its principle further to the source from which that fount is itself supplied; marks not that heaven-sent rain and dew without which the fount would soon be dried up, and the stream cease to flow. For the Gospel teaches us that love to God is the principle and origin of that love to man whereby we shew our gratitude to Him, and that this love to God itself is but the faint reflection of that wondrous mercy which He, in the scheme of redemption, displayed to us. Thus is it true, in a peculiar sense, that "peace on earth and good-will towards men" are blessings showered from heaven upon the

[f] This possible meaning is too forced to demand any special notice, but the question how far benevolence is identical in origin and connected in operation with self-love, will incidentally enter into many parts of our discussion.

human heart; that the purer affections and holier emotions which reign therein all emanate from Him, all centre and culminate in Him, all look for their perfect realization to Him, who Himself is love.

The second interpretation introduces the ethical question of self-love, which has been so ably handled by Bishop Butler, and of which we shall speak presently. It is in the fourth sense that the proverb is most commonly used; in the last that it is most commonly abused. But the further consideration of these also will be more suitably for the present deferred.

In proceeding now to attempt to discover how far the proverb, in its several interpretations, is to be regarded as embodying sound principles of morality, and according with the teaching of revealed religion,—how far and in what sense it is really true that "Charity begins at home,"—we propose, first of all, to discuss the matter on ethical grounds, to see how far this view of charity is consistent with that knowledge of the internal workings of our nature, and of the character of the emotions and affections implanted therein, which the light of reason itself enables us to acquire. Thence, advancing to higher ground, and passing into the brighter light of revelation, we shall consider how far the 'dogma' of our proverb tallies with the view there presented to us of this master-virtue, which our Lord Himself so plainly and repeatedly enjoins as the test and proof of genuine faith, and which His Apostle so firmly believes to be the very essence of that Gospel, which is the one thing needful, that he declares all other gifts and virtues without this to be nothing worth.

In this first consideration of the matter, we shall commence with that narrowest sense of the words 'at home' which makes them to include self and self alone. Thence, gradually widening the sphere of their predication, we shall regard the proverb as enforcing successively the domestic duties and family ties, the spirit of patriotism, or the claims of our fellow-countrymen on our affections, and the bond of Christian brotherhood. And lastly, we shall dwell briefly on the nature and duty of universal benevolence, and con-

sider how far the teaching of our proverb, in its use or abuse, may be justly regarded as running counter to these.

"Self-love," says Bishop Butler, "in its due degree, is as just and morally good as any affection whatsoever[g]." This doctrine he developes in the first, and still more fully in the eleventh of his Sermons, shewing that by this principle is not to be understood the constant and careless gratification of our appetites and passions, but rather the exercising such a salutary check and control over these as is really conducive to our permanent welfare. He shews that this self-love is so far from being incompatible with benevolence or love of our neighbour, that the latter is one of those very affections which self-love "sets us on to gratify;" that the two are in a manner identical in operation, since those most wanting in benevolence are those most engaged in the gratification of their own passions, which are plainly opposed to their real interest, and so to the principle of self-love[h]; since the benevolent affections themselves form one great class of those higher duties, by the gratification of which alone we can attain that happiness which is the aim and object of self-love[i].

It is true, then, that charity should begin at home, even

[g] Preface to Sermons.

[h] This is in Sermon XI. So in Sermon I., he says:—"The greatest satisfactions to ourselves depend upon our having benevolence in a due degree; and self-love is one chief security of our right behaviour towards society."

And as of the feeling, so *à fortiori* of the exercise thereof in good deeds. Vid. Acts xx. 35,—"It is more blessed to give than to receive." Cf. also Merchant of Venice, act iv. sc. 1:—

> "The quality of mercy . . . . .
> . . . . . is twice blessed,
> It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes," &c.

The mistake, says Butler, that benevolence is opposed to self-interest, arose from the erroneous notion that property = happiness, and so that by diminishing our own property to increase that of others, we *ipso facto* diminish our own happiness. How erroneous this is, the above quotations declare.

[i] Aristotle (Ethics, ix. 8,) maintaining the existence of a proper self-love, distinct from and opposed to selfishness, (on the grounds δεῖ φιλεῖν τὸν μάλιστα φιλόν—δεῖ τὸν ἀγαθὸν φίλαυτον εἶναι,) takes the same view of this principle, saying that it is by acts of good-will and kindness towards his neighbours that the good man shews his φιλαυτία, for by this, while doing good to them, he gains for himself the greatest good (τὸ καλόν).

in this narrow sense of the words; only let us take care that it *end* not there, nor be confined too exclusively to this home sphere. There *is* a certain amount of affection to be bestowed on ourselves, a due regard to be had to our own interest: nature herself teaches us to protect ourselves as her first law, to seek our real and final good, and to give some satisfaction to our natural desires, provided they be not inconsistent with this. "No man," as says St. Paul, "ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it[k]." Yet is there a corrupt form of self-love, so gross and so formidable, that this same Apostle, when describing the evils of the latter days[l], places this first and foremost, as if the head and source of all the rest, which, from an undue estimation of ourselves[m], leads to pride; from a too eager desire to gratify our appetites, engenders covetousness; from a depraved wish to bring others down to our own level, is the root of envy.

Such is the result when charity or affection not only begins, but ends at home; when self, and self alone, nay, more, the worst part of self, the depraved appetites and desires, are made the sole objects of our love. It is when a man's own (apparent) interest or humour comes into competition or collision with the good of his neighbour that the principle of this home charity is tested, and full proof is given whether it be true self-love or mere selfishness; for he who, in such case, seems to sacrifice his interest by valuing the wants of his neighbour above his own, is really, *ipso facto*, promoting his own welfare, and thereby displaying the highest self-love[n].

[k] Eph. v. 29. [l] 2 Tim. iii. 2.

[m] "It will greatly conduce to . . . the depression of self-love and advancement of charity to the highest pitch, if we studiously contemplate ourselves, strictly examining our own conscience, and seriously reflecting on our own unworthiness and vileness," &c.—*Barrow*, Serm. xxvi., vol. ii. p. 190.

Far different is that self-love, on which he dwells in Sermon lx., and which he describes as a valuing ourselves according to our real worth.

[n] On this distinction between self-love and selfishness, see Abercrombie's Philosophy of the Moral Feelings, part i. sect. 3, p. 110:—"Like the other mental feelings, it (self-love) is to be considered as part of our moral constitution, and calculated to answer important purposes, provided it be kept in its proper place, and do not encroach upon the duties and affections which we owe

will; he who cares not for those of his own kindred, has little chance of understanding the force of that precept which bids us love all men as *brethren;* and to pass to that higher view of charity (which we shall notice more fully in the later division of our subject) which makes love to God, the highest and purest form of affection, to be itself the source and foundation of love to man,—to such a character the warning of the Apostle may be uttered with literal and terrible significance,—"He who loveth not his *brother*, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen[t]?"

Nor, again, when we widen the sphere, is it to be denied that there are other claims upon our affections which, though weaker than these family ties, are yet prior to and stronger than the claims of universal benevolence. There are various circumstances which tend to strengthen that natural attraction between man and man which exists in us by our social constitution. Among the most powerful of these relations are community of place and country. Unity of birthplace causes men to entertain mutual feelings of interest and sympathy towards one another, retaining herein somewhat of that same mysterious power of association which is strikingly developed in the closer unity of home. And who can deny the force of those claims which demand that our fellow-countrymen should be dearer to us than the rest of mankind? In whose heart are there not smouldering those embers, at least, of the fire of patriotism, which occasion may stir up into the full and glowing flame when war brings collision between nation and nation? Who feels not, at any rate at such times as these, that there is another limit drawn around the exercise of our affections, which ordains that they should only extend with diminished force beyond the confines of our own land[u]?

Another forcible bond of union is community of religion.

[t] 1 St. John iv. 20.

[u] "Patriotism, or love of our country, has in all ages, under free governments at least, been accounted a sublime virtue. It is natural and extensively useful, for, as Cicero well observes, all those charities, all those affections of good-will which we bear to relations, friends, and benefactors, are comprehended in it."—*Beattie's Elements of Moral Science*, vol. ii. c. iii. p. 100.

It is sad to reflect how, from the schisms and dissensions which have torn and rent asunder that Church which is Christ's Body, the circle of these religious affections *may* be narrowed; but we would rather regard them as embracing all who love the name of Christ, and so constituting the principle of universal Christian brotherhood. The further consideration of this will be better for the present deferred, until we have also examined the nature of charity, according to the teaching of revelation.

We pass on now to consider the duty of universal benevolence; how it is true that charity, though it *begin* at home, must not *end* there.

The truth that man is by nature adapted for a state of society, that he has desires which cannot be gratified, hopes which cannot be realized, duties which cannot be fulfilled, without due and seemly intercourse with his kind, has been abundantly proved by the most eminent among moral philosophers[x]. To deny this principle, to believe ourselves single and independent, is, as Bishop Butler declares, as absurd as to suppose the hand and foot to have no natural respect to each other, or to the whole body. Nor is this principle to be confined *altogether* to any limits, (although it may and must appear in greater force within certain bounds,) but extends to the whole human race, inasmuch as we have *some* bond of union with all men. We are all placed by nature in the same or similar circumstances, subject to the same wants and infirmities, endowed with the same faculties, and equally dependent for all things on the great Author of our being. These resemblances constitute *some* bond of sympathy; a weak one, it may be, but still sufficient to make us feel *some* interest in our fellow creatures[y]. From this theory, that the existence of such similarity is the origin of these feelings of affection, or at any rate the occasion which calls them into play, it of course follows naturally that we hold

[x] Vid., e.g., Arist. Polit., I. ii. 9—12.

[y] For here at least the theory of Empedocles, that similarity is the cause of interest and friendship, (τὸ ὅμοιον τοῦ ὁμοίου ἐφίεσθαι,) seems to possess more truth than the opposing one of Heraclitus. (Arist. Eth., VIII. i. 6.) Cf. also Cicero de Off., i. 17. § 58:—"Estque ea jucundissima amicitia, quam similitudo morum conjugavit."

the strength of these feelings to be regularly proportioned to the amount of such similarity which may in each case exist. Thus, according to this view of the matter also, while declaring that there are points of resemblance which should cause us to feel an interest in all of our kind, we recognise to the full those stronger claims which belong to community of race, country, and neighbourhood, and maintain that charity, while it embraces in its wider sphere the whole human race, should be first and most fully exercised in that narrower circle, within which are gathered the firmer ties and more numerous sympathies of home.

This varied strength and gradual expansion of charity may not inaptly be illustrated by a homely metaphor. It is like the ripple made by a stone thrown into the water, clearest and fullest around that centre from which it first takes its rise, and gradually becoming fainter as it enlarges its sphere and becomes more distant from that centre. Nor is it without analogies in the world of sense. Like the senses of sight, and hearing, and smelling, its force and effect become smaller and fainter according as we are further removed, (in the one case by distance, in the other by want of similarity,) from the object which calls these senses or affections into play. While we entertain a particular regard for those connected with us by the closer ties of kindred, friendship, or neighbourhood; while within these narrow banks, where first it gushes forth, our stream of love flows ever with full and vigorous course, let us not seek to stop its progress to that spacious sea which embraces with its circuit the whole world, and is open alike to all.

Let us now consider how far these principles of conduct agree with the teaching of the revealed Word; how far they are in accordance with the spirit of that Gospel which is essentially the religion of love.

This consideration naturally divides itself into two heads, example and precept. We propose, first of all, to examine the question, how far this view of charity, which we have been enforcing, is in accordance with the practice of Him who is our great exemplar, and of those who acted under His more immediate guidance; and then, how far it corre-

sponds with the nature of those doctrines which these followers have recorded for our instruction.

Now, in the first place, nothing can be plainer than that the example of Christ commends to us the duty of universal benevolence. He, who came into the world to save *all* men; He, who died for *all;* who, in the hour of that death, prayed even for His enemies; whose Gospel was to be preached unto all the world, and to procure pardon and peace for a multitude as the sand of the sea-shore in number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues; who that is niggardly in the measure of his love can hope to be like unto Him? who, that extends not his affection, and compassion, and charity unto all, can profess to follow that great commandment of his Lord, that *as* He loved us, *so* should we also love one another? It is not enough, if we would follow His example, who loved even His persecutors, to be kind and affectionate to those of our own kindred. It is not enough, if we would imitate Him, who went about doing good, ministering to the wants and infirmities of all, to rest idly in the security and ease of a home-life, and to be content with performing the duties which are found there. "Our rest there should be the repose of our Master in the house at Bethany, weary with His work-day toil." We must feel that there are wider claims on our sympathy and exertions; that, be our station or occupation what it may, we are labourers in the vineyard of our Lord; stewards with talents committed to our charge, which will be required again with usury; and that we must needs encounter the power of evil, and fight beneath our Master's standard, on a wider and deadlier battle-field; we must follow the example of those apostles of His, not hiding our candle under a bushel, but setting it on a candlestick, that its light may shine before men, that we may be as a city set on a hill, which may serve as a land-mark to the wandering prodigals, and guide them on their homeward road. We, in spirit, if not in deed, must be like unto them, who suffered not tribulation, or peril, or nakedness, or famine, or sword to separate them from the love of Christ, or hinder them in promoting the progress of His kingdom.

And yet, comprehensive as was the scheme of this Gospel

of love, though its blessings and privileges were to extend unto all, yet, even here, in its first promulgation, is the truth shadowed forth to us, that our charity should begin at home. For it was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel that our Lord was primarily and especially sent; it was they who were *first* to be invited to the blessings of the Gospel; it was to the chosen race, in whose land He had been born as man, that the *first* offer of this salvation was to be made. It was the Jews, and the Jews alone, that the first mission of its preachers was commanded to visit; and afterwards, when it was proclaimed to these apostles that they should go into all the world, that their preaching should extend unto the ends of the earth, yet it was at Jerusalem that the labour of love was to *begin;* and it was not until the Jews had wearied by their obstinacy the patience of St. Paul, that he passed, as it were, from this home-circle of his own kindred to the outer world of the Gentiles[z], and thus transferred from its first site that kingdom of heaven, which soon was destined in this new soil to grow from the tiny grain into a vast tree.

And in like manner the precepts of our Lord and His apostles, harmonizing with this their example, while enforcing the duty of universal love, recognise the existence of prior claims on the affections, and declare that our charity must begin at home. Our love is to embrace all men, even those who hate and curse and despitefully use us; love is the fulfilling of the law, and this is divided into two grand duties,—love of God, and love of our neighbour. How universal was the duty of affection enjoined in this second commandment, our Lord shews well in that parable, whereby He answered the narrow-minded question,—"And *who* is my neighbour?" in which, while ingeniously reversing the application of the name from the receiver to the conferrer of the benefit, He declares, by a remarkable instance, that our affection and kindness must extend even to those most utterly alienated from us by national hostility or private enmity[a].

[z] Acts xiv. 46.

[a] "Such is the object of our charity, and thus did our Lord Himself expound it, when by a Jewish lawyer being put to resolve the question,—'And who is my neighbour?' He did propound a case or history, whereby He did extort from

Yet, at the same time, while thus inculcating the doctrine of universal kindness and charity, He and His followers are far from neglecting to temper such precepts of general philanthropy with others declaring the claims of those connected with us by nearer ties, and the more urgent duties of home. It is in the Epistles, (especially in the pastoral ones, which enter into the details of ecclesiastical and social economy,) that such precepts naturally are most plainly enforced [b]. It were needless to accumulate quotations bearing on this point; it may suffice to refer to a few of the most striking [c], and to observe, that while the Gospel recognises to the full the narrower claims of kindred on the one hand, and the universal claims of all mankind on the other, it introduces a new ground of interest and affection, which was peculiarly and more fully applicable to those days of its infancy, when its little band of followers were arrayed, as it were, against the whole world; so that this simultaneous teaching of the universality and speciality of the duties of the affections is contained in the simple apostolic precept, that good should be done unto *all* men, but *specially* unto them of the household of faith [d].

The spirit of this precept explains to us partly the meaning of our Lord's assertion, that His commandment of love was *new*. The statement seems, at first, to be strange, since the laws of the old covenant were divisible into the two great

that Rabbi his confession, that even a Samaritan, discharging a notable office of humanity and mercy to a Jew, did thereby most truly approve himself a good neighbour to him; and consequently, that reciprocal performances of such offices were due from a Jew to a Samaritan; whence it might appear that this relation of neighbourhood is universal and unlimited."—*Barrow*, Serm. xxv., vol. ii. p. 171.

[b] Εἰ δέ τις χήρα τέκνα ἢ ἔκγονα ἔχει, μανθανέτωσαν πρῶτον τὸν ἴδιον οἶκον εὐσεβεῖν. εἰ δέ τις τῶν ἰδίων καὶ μάλιστα τῶν οἰκείων οὐ προνοεῖ, τὴν πίστιν ἤρνηται, καὶ ἐστὶν ἀπίστου χείρων.—1 Tim. v. 4, 8.

[c] 2 Cor. viii. 24; Eph. i. 15; Coloss. i. 4; Heb. vi. 10; 1 Peter i. 22, iv. 8, &c.

[d] Ἄρα οὖν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν, ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς πάντας, μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως.—Gal. vi. 10.

On this union of the early Christians, cf. Tertullian, de Præsc. Hæret. 20:—"Communicatio pacis et appellatio fraternitatis et contesseratio hospitalitatis, quæ jura non alia ratio regit, quam ejusdem sacramenti una traditio."

heads of love of God and love of our neighbour; since then, too, the love which "worketh no ill to his neighbour" was the fulfilling of the law. But Christ's commandment was new, inasmuch as it threw a new light upon the origin, and infused a fresh principle into the operation, of the perfect law of love. To this question, bearing as it does in more senses than one upon the subject of our proverb, we may well devote some consideration, that we may see how far the teaching of the Gospel may alter or confirm that of the light of nature and of the moral law respecting the proper sphere and working of charity.

Now, first of all, we say that our Lord's commandment was new, because it introduces a new bond of union, a new principle of love[e]; it represents men to each other under a new aspect as *fellow-sinners*, equally subject to the wrath of God, equally deserving of condemnation, equally delivered from that curse by the same Saviour who became a curse for all. It brings the spiritual and eternal interests of our fellow-creatures before us; it displays them to us as sharers with us in the divine love; children with us of the one God and Father of all; members of the same Church, of which Christ is the Head; co-heirs with us of the same blessings of salvation; fellow-travellers with us towards the same better and heavenly country, whither He, our Redeemer, hath entered in before[f]. It shews us that, besides the

[e] "It (Christianity) throws a new light, too, on love to our fellow-men, by shewing them to us as fellow-sinners, and making us concerned about their spiritual rather than their temporal welfare: it teaches us, too, a peculiar love, distinct from the principle of universal benevolence, the love of the brethren; for 'he who loveth Him that begat, loveth them also that are begotten of Him.' This is the *new* commandment which the Saviour left unto us, that as He loved us, so should we also love one another. He specifies works over and above those of general benevolence, of which He says,—'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My *brethren*, ye have done it unto Me;' works done from love to His people, and consequently from love to Himself." *Wardlaw's Christian Ethics*, p. 337.

[f] "The last effect of the Redeemer's love which I would mention is the close union which it establishes amongst Christians. Without doubt our ideas of mankind at large are exalted, when we contemplate them as objects of the divine love.

"This unites the highest with the lowest, the wisest with the most unlearned;

family connected with us by natural ties, there is a larger family beyond of which we are members, whom we are bound to love and cherish and care for; and thus it enlarges and hallows the sphere of that home whence our charity should begin and in which it should centre.

But, secondly, our Lord's commandment was also new because it introduced a new and higher *standard* of love. The teaching of the old law, as expounded by Christ Himself, was, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as *thyself*." This precept of course itself declares the existence and enforces the duty of proper self-love[g]. But moreover, according to this precept, not only does charity *begin* at home, but in its whole operation it has some reference and relation to this narrowest home-sphere[h]. Not only is its wider exercise the expansion of self-love and of love of those most nearly allied to us, but it must, throughout all such expansion, be continually looking back to that source whence it emanated, and striving to make the equable flow of its current proportionate to the life and force of that primal fount; it must be ever regulating

to know that, if they have nothing else in common, they are dear to the same God, and actuated by the same feelings, and governed by the same love; as they travel to the same country, where all distinctions will be done away, except that single distinction which separates 'the children of darkness' from 'the children of light,'—'the children of this world' from 'the children of the kingdom.'"—*Archbishop Sumner's Sermons on Charity*, xx. pp. 344, 345.

[g] "He also expressly hath commanded us to love all men, not excluding ourselves from the number; to love our neighbour, and therefore ourselves, who of all are nearest to ourselves; who occur as the first objects of humanity and charity; whose needs we most sensibly feel; whose good is in itself no less considerable than the single good of any other person; who must first look to our own good before we can be capable to love others, or do any good to our neighbour."—*Barrow*, Serm. lx. vol. iii. p. 464.

[h] "Loving our neighbour as ourselves," says Baxter, "relates both to kind, degree, and reality of love. It means that, as you must love yourself according to that degree of goodness which is in you and no more, so must you as impartially love your neighbour, according to that degree of goodness which is in him."—*Baxter's Practical Works*, vol. vi. p. 430.

But Bishop Andrewes interprets the precept in a different sense:—"The manner of our love, 'as ourselves,' 'non quantum, sed sicut,' not so much as thyself, but after the same manner."—*Bp. Andrewes's Pattern of Catechistical Doctrine*, p. 174.

and steering itself by self-love, which is the rule and measure of charity [i].

But Christ's new commandment withdraws our gaze from this internal principle, and directs it to a higher standard; it points out a nobler model for our imitation than any which can be found in the heart of fallen man, however well its affections may be regulated. It breathes a new spirit into the law of charity, explaining at the same time the meaning of our Lord's assertion, that the second commandment was like unto the first, the love of our neighbour like unto the love of God. For henceforth it was no longer to be, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour *as thyself*," but, "*As I* have loved you, *so* shall ye also love one another." This, then, the love of God manifest in the flesh, is the grand model of Christian charity. Thus, while the mystery of redemption adds still greater force and new obligations to the first commandment of the old law, requiring our entire devotion to God, its teaching declares the second command, the love of our neighbour, to be at once the offspring and the proof of the first; like unto it as emanating from the same principle of gratitude to God, and like unto it as being the way in which we shew our obedience to that great command [k]. Love, then, is the fulfilling of the entire law, both as regards God and man; it is the struggle, by complete devotion to His service, to draw to ourselves some rays of the brightness of His essence, who Himself is love, and to diffuse the warmth and light of those rays around, by striving, in our dealings with our fellow-men, to follow the example which He hath given us [l]. Thus, while according to the teaching of the old law, the measure of our love to others is to be sought in ourselves, in the workings of our own nature, and

[i] ὅσπερ κανὼν καὶ μέτρον ὤν.—*Ar. Eth.*, III. iv. 5.

[k] Ἀγαπητοὶ, ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους· ὅτι ἡ ἀγαπὴ ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐστι, καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν, ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ γεγέννηται, καὶ γινώσκει τὸν θεόν. Ἐάν τις εἴπῃ, Ὅτι ἀγαπῶ τὸν Θεὸν, καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ μισῇ ψεύστης ἐστίν, κ.τ.λ.—1 John iv. 7, 20.

[l] "This is first in religion, to know what is true in God; and the next is to partake thereof, i.e. for us, in our measure and degree, to be what God is in fulness, might, and excellency, wherein God is imitable and communicable. (Eph. v. 1; 2 Pet. i. 4)."—*Whichcote's Works*, vol. i. disc. i. p. 33.

benevolence is to be proportioned to self-love; the Gospel bids us turn our gaze from earth to heaven, and strive in our conduct to throw back some faint reflection of that incomprehensible love which God hath displayed unto the world [m].

Let us now combine these views of charity which we have hitherto examined separately, and, considering what is the conclusion as to its proper sphere and extent which may be drawn from the joint teaching of reason and revelation, test thereby the truth of the proverb, that "Charity begins at home."

Now, first of all, it is certain that both of these unite in declaring the existence of prior claims on the affections. It is clear and patent to our reason, that our love is not to be equally distributed to all, but that there are those on whom we are by nature bound to bestow the first and greatest share; that in exercising such discrimination and partiality, we are but carrying out the design of the Creator Himself, who to this end hath divided the inhabitants of the earth into families, the individuals of which are bound to love, assist, and support one another with peculiar tenderness and care. It is evident that it is in the home circle that the

[m] "They do not divide our love, but they set it in its right course, first, wholly to God, as the sovereign good, and only for Himself worthy to be loved; and then back from Him it is, according to His will, derived downwards to our neighbour; for then only we love both ourselves and others aright, when we make our love to Him the reason and the rule of both. So, then, our love is not to be immediately divided betwixt Him and our neighbour or any creature, but is first of all to be bestowed on Him, and then He diffuses, by way of reflection, so much of it upon others as He thinks fit."—*Leighton's Sermons*, xxix. p. 291.

"The sum of the first table was, 'Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;' the sum of the second table, 'Love thy neighbour as thyself;' and they are well joined together; and this latter dependeth well upon the former, 'ut rivus justitiæ ducatur e fonte pietatis,' (Greg. Mor. xix. 23,) that the stream of justice may run along from the well-spring of piety."—*Bp. Andrewes, Pattern of Catechistical Doctrine*, p. 169.

"Love God truly, and you will easily love your neighbour; for you will see God's image on him, or interest in him, and feel all His precepts and mercies obliging you hereunto. To this end let Christ be your continual study; He is the full revelation of the love of God; He is the lively pattern of love."—*Baxter's Practical Works*, vol. vi. p. 432.

affections are first called into play; and the seeds of love, there first sown in the mind of the child, are to be gradually trained for that maturer stage when they shall be called upon to range in a wider sphere. *There* are to be found bonds of sympathy and union, so evidently innate in our constitution, that we are wont to call them emphatically the *natural* affections and ties, and to stigmatize with the epithet of unnatural, or violator of the laws of nature, whosoever does not display these affections in their full force and vigour. There are to be found affections so strong, that the deepest and purest love to God is compared with that of children to their father, and the highest form of general benevolence is described as loving all men as our brethren. There it is that the first sparks must be kindled of that fire of love, which afterwards, while still burning there most clearly and brightly, may diffuse light and warmth far around. In a word, "the natural affections are the proper moral school of the heart[n]." He who has not begun his lesson there, is little likely to be trained for the exercise of charity on a larger scale; he who does not give proof of his aptitude in the lesser, is little likely to be adapted for the wider sphere; he who is devoid of these affections, has not taken even the first steps towards the attainment of the spirit of universal benevolence.

And even supposing this course of training to have been accomplished, and this spirit of benevolence acquired, still it must not interfere with the due operation of these first affections, of which it is but the expansion. There is, be it remembered, a rule of justice to be observed, as well as a rule of love[o]. We owe certain prior duties to ourselves, and to those of our kindred; and, if these be neglected, it is in vain to seek for or lay claim to general benevolence. If the root be thus unsound, vain is it to look for the fruit. However far our affections may strive to extend their sphere, their very pith and marrow is wanting; and he can never justly claim to be benevolent or charitable, whose heart is closed to

[n] Whewell's Elements of Morality, i. p. 99, § 174.

[o] "Verus amator debet esse verus æstimator." — *St. August., de Doctr. Christ.*, i. 27.)

those to whom he is bound by the strongest ties and owes the deepest debt of love. He who thus pretends to universal philanthropy, while devoid even of natural affection, while he affirms all men to be equally dear to him, is in reality declaring them to be equally indifferent[p].

There is another point of view from which we may contemplate the priority of the home affections, and that is, by the practical operation of the spirit of love in those many ways which are included in the simple scriptural phrase of "doing good." It were impossible thus to display universally or generally the fruits of the spirit of charity. But it becomes us not, therefore, to abandon the task altogether, but rather to seek to do good unto those to whom the divine arrangement seems to denote that our attention should be turned; those who come first and most frequently before our notice; those whom we have the most frequent opportunities of benefiting; those towards whom our natural feeling especially incites us to such exercise of love. The case with regard to these works of charity has been well compared to that of a man settling in some uncultivated region, who is not deterred by its vastness and the hopelessness of reclaiming it all from centering his energies around some little spot, and expending his labours thereon[q]. And thence, as time and opportunity allow, he may gradually extend the sphere of his toil; but let him not neglect that portion wherein he first learned to work, and where he first saw gladly the fruit of his labour, and so suffer the briars and weeds to choke the good seed he there had sown.

[p] Vid. Trench on Proverbs, p. 79.

[q] "I go into an uncultivated country, and I see before me a wide-spread field, far too extensive for my unassisted strength. But I do not on that account return to the place I have left, or sit down inactive. I apply my plans to an insulated spot, which first attracts my interest and invites my care. So, in the wide field of that world in which their lot is cast, every one may select for themselves that particular sphere of usefulness to which, in God's providence, they are directed."—*Archbishop Sumner's Sermons on Charity*, xviii. p. 307.

"All men are to be loved alike; but, since thou canst not do good to all men, therefore thou must specially do good to them, to whom thou art, as it were by lot, most nearly joined, by opportunity either of time, of place, or of any other thing whatsoever. (1 Tim. v.; Gal. vi. 10)."—*Bullinger's Decades*, I., Sermon x. p. 185.

Charity, then, must begin at home, both as regards priority of time, since there the affections are first called into play, and as regards its intensity, after those affections have been thus aroused. There are of course other claims on our love[r],

[r] The "degrees" of these claims are thus drawn out in detail by two great divines:—

"It is certain there are degrees, for to omit our duties to our parents is worse than to omit the same duties to a stranger. Now where there is a greater duty, there must be a greater affection, and so greater love: and the order of our love must be thus:—

(α) To God: for He is that *bonum* by the participation whereof all others are *bona;* and to which all others give place, as in policy, to *bonum publicum.*

(β) Our own souls, for we are *unitas,* an unity, or one entire in and with ourselves, and cannot be but united with our brethren.

(γ) The souls of our brethren before our own bodies; for any man's soul may directly be partaker of the universal good which is in God, but so can no man's body, but by participation with the soul, and therefore the soul is to be preferred.

(δ) Our own bodies before other men's.

(ε) The bodies of our neighbours; and among them,
first to them that have need; and of those,
first to the household of faith (Gal. vi. 10); and of them,
first to our countrymen (Ps. cxxii. 8), brethren and companions; and of these,
first them which are *nostri,* our friends and acquaintance; and of them,
first to our own, and namely, them of our household (1 Tim. v. 8), and our kindred; and
first the wife, (Gen. ii. 24, 'they shall be one flesh;' 'am I not better to thee than ten sons?' 1 Sam. i. 8.)

Thus much of the object, our neighbour."—*Bishop Andrewes, Pattern of Catechist. Doct.,* pp. 172, 173.

"Our neighbour is to have the priority of our love before another, as they stand further off, or are nearer unto us, and the order is this:—

1. The nearest conjunction among Christians is that of the spirit of grace, of religion, and these are to have the first place in our love, 'Do good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of faith.' (Gal. vi. 10.)
2. Among these, if there be no disparity, then those first who are nearest unto us, either in friendship, blood, or in some other way.
3. After, as they stand nearer or farther off in relation.
   1. The husband or wife—parents.
   2. The children, and those of the family.
   3. Our kindred.
   4. Our friends or acquaintances—near neighbours.
   5. Our countrymen.
   6. Societies of men before any particular. But this is not perpetual, and may be broken by many accidents and intervenient occasions."—*Bishop Nicholson's Exposition of the Catechism,* p. 103.

which, though posterior to those of kindred, are yet prior to those of mankind in general. Some of these we have already briefly noticed: on one alone would we now bestow a few further observations, namely, Christian fellowship.

The teaching of Scripture, while it enforces most clearly the due observance of those claims which we have already noticed, yet dwells on no bond of union so frequently and so strongly as on that of Christian brotherhood, the love of the saints, the affection due to those who, like ourselves, love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. There were doubtless, as we before noticed, circumstances which rendered this bond of union far stronger in the first ages of the Gospel than it can be now. Yet is there not even now a marked distinction to be drawn between our communion with the children of light, and with the rest of the world, who still lie in darkness and in the shadow of death? With these, indeed, we have in common "one God and Father of all:" but with the former, how many other ties, which constrain us to love and sympathy with one another; "one Lord," (even the Incarnate Son of God,) "one faith, one baptism, one hope of our calling," and "the unity of the Spirit," which is "the bond of peace[s]." The latter, indeed, claim our pity and compassion; it becomes us by our labours and our prayers to strive to bring them into the fold of Christ, and to procure for them those blessings from which they are at present excluded[t]. But with those who, like us, are followers of Jesus, we have indeed a higher communion: built up together with them "upon the one foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the head cornerstone,"—members in common of that same body, even His Church, which "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love, growing up unto Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ[u]." It is this bond of union and love which is the life-giving principle of the Church militant on

[s] Eph. iv. 3—6.

[t] Cf. Sewell's Christian Morals, p. 366.

[u] Eph. iv. 15, 16.

earth[x]: it is this which, in a higher and purer form, will be the glory and crown of the Church triumphant in heaven.

But, on the other hand, these prior claims are by no means inconsistent with the duty of universal benevolence. Our charity *must* begin at home; but equally loud are those calls, both of conscience from within and the Word of God from without, which forbid it to end there. The affections first nurtured beneath the roof of home, and among our own kindred, must gradually extend their sphere. Gradually the circle enlarges, as we observe further and further how many there are with whom we have *something* in common. As it was the strongest form of such community which first called into play those which are termed the natural affections, so, by degrees, is our sphere of charity extended, as we perceive the weaker bonds of union, which, with more or less power, connect us with the whole human race. Through the various stages of community of descent, of abode, of country, of interest, of religion, and various others, (which we cannot arrange in any fixed scale of intensity[y], since their force differs with the peculiar constitution of individuals,) we are led by degrees to look upon all mankind as members with us of the same human *family*, and so to extend in a weaker form to all, a share of those affections which belong primarily and chiefly to the closer-knit family of home[z].

[x] Cf. Morell's Philosophy of Religion, ch. ix. p. 297.

[y] Cicero (de Off. I. xvii. § 58) attempts to do so, as follows:—"Sed, si contentio quædam et comparatio fiat, quibus plurimum tribuendum sit officii, principes sunt patria et parentes, quorum beneficiis maximis obligati sumus: proximi liberi, totaque domus, quæ spectat in nos solos, neque aliud potest habere perfugium: deinceps bene convenientes propinqui, quibuscum etiam communis plerumque fortuna est."

[z] There seem to be two opposite modes among ethical writers of viewing and expressing the relation between the natural affections and universal benevolence. The one, starting with the inherent principle of general benevolence, regards those claims of closer community as special occasions which call this general principle most fully into play. (Butler, Sermon i.) The other, commencing, according to the order suggested by experience, with the natural affections, regards the spirit of universal benevolence as the due and further development of these. (Whewell, El. Mor., i. p. 106, § 184.) It will be seen that we adopt the latter mode: of course this view does not at all run counter to the theory of the existence by nature of a principle of universal benevolence

The man, therefore, who is imbued with the true spirit of Christian charity, while his first care is to perform the duties of home, and to provide for the temporal and spiritual wants of those of his own family, rests not content there. He feels that there are those beyond to whom it becomes him, according as he has opportunity, to strive to do good. His heart is enlarged beyond all private considerations: his charity (in a sense perhaps different from that which the Apostle designed to express) "never faileth." He "seeketh not his own" alone; but, while having due regard both to his own welfare and that of those most dear to him, while thus fostering both proper self-love and natural affection, suffers not these to degenerate respectively into selfishness and exclusiveness, nor allows motives of self-interest ever to interfere with his regard for the public good[a].

And further, he who has best performed his duty to his family will be best *adapted* for doing good in a wider sphere. The duties differ not much in kind, but mainly in degree. He who has been a good parent will make an able ruler; he who has managed his family well will be a useful citizen; he who has been tested and approved by the training of home-duties and home-affections can alone be qualified for the more extensive labour of love[b].

potentially though not actually, *in posse* though not *in esse*, *ἐν δυνάμει* though not *ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ*.

The former of these theories is most strikingly developed by Jonathan Edwards, who merges the private affections in general philanthropy, and declares them to be only valuable because they are phases of his great principle, the love of being. "The nature," he says, "of true virtue consists in a disposition to benevolence towards being in general: though from such a disposition may arise exercises of love to particular beings, as objects are presented and occasions arise."—*Dissertation on Nature of True Virtue*, ch. vi.

[a] We can hardly, however, accept Barrow's explanation of "Charity seeketh not her own." "The regard," he says, "which charity beareth to its own interest, in comparison to that which it beareth to the concerns of others, hath the same proportion as one man hath to all men; being, therefore, exceedingly small, and, as it were, none at all." (Sermon xxvii., vol. ii. p. 214.) This seems to cut at the root of our theory of the existence of the prior claims of one's-self and one's own.

[b] The analogies between the relations subsisting in the family and those in the state are drawn out by Arist., Polit. I. iii. 12 and 13. The notion that monarchy was but the natural expansion of the paternal authority was a common one among the ancient philosophers.

The Gospel introduces far wider claims on the affections than did the letter of the old law, of which the Jews failed to perceive the real spirit[c], as shewn clearly by the question before alluded to, which drew forth the parable of the good Samaritan. It extends our love to every man, both friend and foe. Now the Blood of Christ hath cemented all mankind; the love of God hath combined all together in a union closer than that of *neighbours*, the union of *brethren*. With regard to this universal spirit of Christian love, there is neither "Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all, and in all." It is this, the wide expansion of the spiritual emotions, that is the highest form of benevolence; which, though in one sense confined to the flock of Christ, yet in another extends even to all without its pale, striving to bring them nearer to us, and so to place them within the circle of our warmer love[d].

And as of the affection, so also of the active display thereof in almsgiving. It were needless to treat at any length of this, which is but one mode of the practical working of the former, for Scripture plainly enjoins and values these good deeds as evidences of our love to man, and, through him, of our love to God. The proper extent of and prior claims on charity are the same, in both senses of the term. But there is this difference: that, with regard to this secondary sense of charity, there is a *new* principle introduced, namely, the degree of need of our bounty, in which various classes and individuals may stand[e]. Our affec-

[c] "And forasmuch as the Pharisees, (with their most pestilent traditions, and false interpretations, and glosses,) had corrupted, and almost clearly stopped up the pure well of God's living word, teaching that this love and charity pertained only to a man's friends, and that it was sufficient for a man to love them who do love him, and hate his foes: therefore Christ opened this well again, purged it and scoured it by giving unto His godly law of charity a true and clear interpretation," &c.—*Homilies*, vol. i. sermon v., Christian Love and Charity, 1st part, p. 55.

[d] "Whosoever doth need our help, he is our neighbour, be he Jew or Gentile, Christian or infidel, yea, friend or enemy, he is our neighbour. To him we ought to be near to do him good."—*Archbishop Sandys*, Sermon xi., p. 205.

[e] It is in this practical sense especially that the following observations of Whewell are true:—

"The benevolent affections are also modified by a regard to the circumstances

tion may rightly be bestowed alike on all who are not bound to us by any special ties: these ties are the only considerations which should influence our distribution of affection, besides the distinction between the evil and the good. But in the free gift of our surplusage of this world's goods, we should take into account also the various degrees of want and distress, and consider well in what quarter our bounty may be most serviceably bestowed. It is to our brother *in need* that we should turn our attention; it is he that giveth *unto the poor* who lendeth unto the Lord; it is the man who provideth for the *sick and needy* who hath the promise of deliverance in time of trouble[f].

In conclusion, may not still further light be thrown on the question mooted by our proverb, by considering the principle from which, according to the teaching of the Gospel, charity must proceed? It is, be it remembered, the offspring of faith; it is faith working by love[g]. The two are really inseparable, as the tree and its fruits. The tree may indeed stand bearing no fruit, but, if so, it is worthless, fit only to be cut down. And so the mere belief of lip-service; the mere historical assent to the truths of Christianity, though the conviction be so strong that it could "remove mountains," profiteth nothing. More than this: is not the apostle here presenting but an imaginary case, such as could never

of the object. We naturally share in the emotions which we witness in men; we have a *fellow-feeling*, a *sympathy* with them. When this disposition leads us to feel pain at the sight of pain, it is *compassion*, we *commiserate* the object. This feeling, being strongly confirmed by piety, came to be called *pity*. Such a disposition, as it prompts us to abstain from adding to the pain felt, is *mercy* or *clemency*; as it prompts us to remove the pain or want, it is *charity*."—*El. Mor.*, i. p. 73, § 135.

[f] "Acquaint thyself with the physiognomy of want, and let the dead colours and first lines of necessity suffice to tell thee there is an object for thy bounty. Spare not where thou canst not easily be prodigal, and fear not to be undone by mercy; for since he who hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Almighty Rewarder, who observes no ides, but every day for His payments, charity becomes pious usury, Christian liberality the most thriving industry, and what we adventure in a cock-boat may return in a carrack unto us. He who thus casts his bread upon the waters shall surely find it again; for though it falleth to the bottom, it sinks but like the axe of the prophet, to rise again unto him."—*Sir T. Browne's Works*, vol. iv. p. 62, On Christian Morals.

[g] Gal. v. 6.

be realized? for surely there *can* be no *deep* conviction, no *true* faith, unless it bring forth the fruits of charity[h]. But, waiving this question, still clearer is it that the fruits will not be found without the tree be in its full vigour and life, that the light of charity shining before men in good works can be spread abroad from that heart alone in which the fire of faith is brightly burning. The three cardinal virtues of St. Paul are in reality but one; a symbol herein (with all reverence be it said) of that Tri-une God from whom they spring. Faith is the root and stem, wherein lies the sap, the source of life; hope, the foliage which buds forth therefrom, and clothes it with beauty and verdure; charity, the fruit which is thence brought forth unto perfection. Faith in the past; charity in the present; hope for the future: faith in that work of redemption which hath opened for us the gates of everlasting life; and yet it is *still* faith, which assumes the brighter form of hope in the promises which are yet to be fulfilled, in the prospect of a better and a heavenly country[i]; it is still faith[k] which is the mainspring and principle of the greatest of all, charity[l].

This, then, shews us still more clearly the connexion between the two great commandments, love of God, and love of man. That alone is true charity which proceeds from faith and gratitude towards God; which seeks, out of love to Him, to fulfil His perfect will and law by at once extending to all that universal spirit of love which He hath enjoined, and at the same time observing those special claims enforced by the order and harmony which Himself hath ordained.

Thus let our charity be practised on earth, beginning, but

[h] This is implied in the language of our Articles:—"Insomuch that by them (i.e. by good works) a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit."—*Article XII., Of Good Works.*

[i] Heb. xi. 13.

[k] The *fides formata* of St. Paul, as opposed to the *fides informis* of St. James.

[l] "Love is the immediate impulse to action, the mainspring of the moral machinery: faith, or the belief of the truth, is what maintains its elasticity and force: love is the vital energy of the living frame: the truth, received by faith, is the food by which that vital energy is kept in active and efficient vigour." —*Wardlaw's Christian Ethics*, p. 328.

yet not ending, at home. So may we hope[m] that, in a different and higher sense, though it begin at home here on earth, yet it may not indeed end there, but may be that charity which "never faileth." "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity," which abideth not only now, but alway[n]. Faith will be swallowed up in certainty, when, in a higher world, the secrets which are now hid from us shall be at length disclosed to our view; when we shall no longer see as through a glass darkly, but face to face, and shall know even as we are known. Hope will be changed for full enjoyment, when once we have reached the delights of paradise. But charity, which came from heaven, and was thence shed upon the heart of man, shall there at length be found in perfect beauty, in the presence of an all-loving God: charity, which blossoms on earth amid trials and sorrows, shall there at length find its rest, and bring forth fruit unto perfection: charity, which here soweth with toil and care, shall there reap its plenteous

[m] "Nihil aliud est merces nostra quam perfrui Deo. Ergo caritas non solum non excludit, sed etiam facit habere oculum ad mercedem."—*Thomas Aquinas.*

A like incentive to good deeds is commended to us in St. Luke xvi. 9:—Ποιήσατε ἑαυτοῖς φίλους ἐκ τοῦ μαμωνᾶ τῆς ἀδικίας, κ. τ. λ.

[n] We prefer to adhere to this old interpretation of 1 Cor. xiii. 13, in spite of Alford's scholarly criticism (v. his notes *ad locum*), supported herein by Bishop Andrewes, (Catech. Doctr., p. 108,) who says,

"Love is the greatest virtue, even above faith and hope,

"1. In breadth, for faith and hope are within the bounds of a man's person, but love is to God Himself.

"2. In length; where the other end with life, love is after this life, even in heaven."

Thus also is it taken by Archbishop Sumner, (Sermons on Charity, iii. p. 40):—"Now this spirit (charity) survives the grave, is no more designed to be extinguished than the soul itself: it is the very spirit which the whole revelation of the Gospel is meant to form; to form and exercise in this preparatory stage of being, that it may be made perfect and exist for ever in the kingdom of heaven.

"On the other hand, faith and hope belong to this present world alone. They are, as it were, the sails and the oars which carry us forward to the wished-for port; but when the mariner has reached the haven where he would be, he lays by his oars and takes down his sails. Faith is the evidence of things not seen as yet; but when those things are seen actually, there will be no more need of faith to shew them us. Hope is the prospect of something future, the anticipation of joy to come hereafter: but what a man has, he ceases to hope for; he is no longer in expectation, but in possession."

harvest in the presence of our Father and our Redeemer°. There, in that region where the causes which usually arouse it here shall be unknown, shall it be found in some higher and purer form than any which the heart of man can conceive. For there will be no compassion, or pity, or forgiveness where there shall be found no more curse, where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things shall have passed away." There it can be but the sympathy of joy; the holy union of those blessed saints, who "shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat:" the communion of heart with heart in their glory and rejoicing, when with one voice, as the sound of many waters and mighty thunderings, they pour forth the loud-swelling strains of praise and thanksgiving: the sympathy of delight, when "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." There, in its true home, it will be no transient emotion aroused at the sight of suffering and pain, no affection ranging within narrow bounds, but the one all-pervading principle of love, which will be throughout eternity the glory and crown of the ransomed in Zion, ever reflecting the brightness of Him who reigneth there, and who Himself is love.

° "They sin who tell us Love can die.
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity.
In heaven ambition cannot dwell,
Nor avarice in the vaults of hell;
Earthly these passions of the earth,
They perish when they have their birth;
But Love is indestructible.
Its holy flame for ever burneth,
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth;
Too oft on earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times oppres't,
It here is tried and purified,
Then hath in heaven its perfect rest:
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest-time of Love is there."

Southey, Curse of Kehama, x. 10.